

JPTranslation.com

Japanese Patent Translation by Gerald R. Gooding
Electrical and Mechanical Arts

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Free Machine Translation on the Web

The Japanese Patent Office (JPO) provides free on-the-fly translation of Japanese patent documents.

To read more about the service, keep on reading. To skip all of that and try it yourself, go right to the step-by-step procedure at the bottom of this page.

Does it work?

Yes (kind of). The quality of machine translation does not approach that of a human translator. Depending on what you are looking for, however, a machine translation could be all you need. A machine translation, for example, could help you make a better decision on whether to pay for a human translation.

Practice improves one's skill at using machine translation. Examiners at the US and European patent offices report that they do, in fact, make good use of JPO machine translations, and that their skill in using them improves over time. You may not be impressed with the results you get on your first try, but don't give up. After a few attempts you might strike gold. It costs nothing and takes very little time, so you have little to lose.

One visitor to this site reported that he was delighted with the results on his very first try. He wanted to have the claims of a chemistry patent translated, and as is too often the case, he needed the translation immediately. He followed the directions at the bottom of this page, and obtained a machine translation that was satisfactory for his purposes.

Machine and Human Translation Compared

I tested the JPO system by using it to translate a patent document I had already translated the old fashioned way. Much of the resulting machine translation was quite difficult to understand even though I knew what it was supposed to say. The computer did a much better job, however, when it came to the following straight-forward operating procedure:

Machine Translation	Human Translation
<i>The operator who is going to use a personal digital assistant first presses the fingerprint of the finger point against the fingerprint input section, and inputs his fingerprint (step S101).</i>	A person wishing to use the terminal inputs her fingerprint by pressing a fingertip against the fingerprint input unit (Step 101).
<i>Next, the fingerprint inputted in the fingerprint feature-extraction section is incorporated as image data (step 102), and extraction work of the characteristic feature point is performed</i>	Next, the fingerprint characteristic extraction unit reads-in the inputted fingerprint data as image data (Step 102), and performs a characteristic point extraction task (Step 103).

(step 103).	<i>After an extraction of the characteristic feature point finishes, the fingerprint data and pattern matching which are registered beforehand are performed (step 104).</i>	When the characteristic point extraction is finished, a pattern match is performed against pre-registered data (Step 104).
	<i>If the matching with the fingerprint data inputted the data registered beforehand and can now be taken, it supposes that it is good using a personal digital assistant (step 106), and a matching cannot be taken, it is regarded as an unauthorized use, and use is made impossible (step 105).</i>	If a match is found between the pre-registered data and the presently input fingerprint data, portable terminal use is enabled (Step 106); but if the data do not match, this is treated as an attempted unauthorized use, and terminal use is disabled (Step 105).

Unfortunately, at the present state of the art, the above example is far from typical.

To try it yourself ... (You may wish to print these instructions before starting.)

- ☛ Access the JPO English language home page at <http://www.jpo-go.jp/index.htm>.
- ☛ At the home page, click on the search function of the Industrial Property Digital Library (IPDL).
- ☛ On the displayed page, select 'Searching PAJ' (Patent Abstracts of Japan). This takes you to a 'Searching PAJ' page that supports searches by text, date, IPC code, or document number (application no., pre-grant publication no., or patent no.).
- ☛ Enter the document number (e.g. 10-63844 for the above pre-grant publication) and click on SEARCH. This displays a list of one document (in this case).
- ☛ Click on the document number to display an English language abstract of the document. This abstract has been translated by a human.
- ☛ Click the DETAIL button (at the top of the page). This will display a machine translation of the claims.
- ☛ To get translations of the other parts of the document, click on the title of the desired section.

A major upgrade of the English language search capability at the Japanese Patent Office web site was completed in March of 2002. The site now provides menus and detailed instructions in English for accessing the following, in addition to the above:

- ☛ Patent and utility model gazette (including the machine translation function)
- ☛ Patent and utility model concordance (the numbers of other documents related to yours; e.g., the numbers of the related application, pre-grant publication, and patent.)
- ☛ FI/F-term Search (Searching by JPO file classifications)
- ☛ Japanese Intellectual Property Laws, in English (at the home page, click on *General Information*, under *Outline of Industrial Property Systems*)

To access these databases and documents, follow the above link to the JPO English language home page, locate the section on the IPDL (Industrial Property Digital Library), and click on the search function. Click on the type of document you want (e.g. "Patent and Utility Model Gazette").

The top page of each database has a HELP button for detailed instructions.

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